

Youth in Government

Michigan high school students desiring to learn more about the state's political and governmental processes may wish to take part in the YMCA's annual Youth in Government Program. The program aims to duplicate the state government's functions and is touted as one of the best methods for helping young people to understand the complexities of state government.

Through Youth in Government, students run in school elections as representatives, senators, legislative support staff, or members of the government's executive branch. Student councils or government classes elect students to serve as delegates who participate in regional fall conferences, held in September and October. During the fall conferences, delegates elect regional speakers of the house, lieutenant governors, freshmen speakers, and chaplains to preside at the state-wide conference in Lansing in March or April. Youth governors are also elected in each region to run for state-wide election when all the groups from all the regions convene in Lansing.

The youth governor attends the National youth Governor's Conference in Washington, D.C. the following summer. He or she has the opportunity to meet the President, cabinet officers, senators, representatives, Supreme Court justices, and other government officials. The youth governor also has the opportunity to attend the YMCA's conference on National Affairs held at Black Mountain in North Carolina.

In addition to simulating the functions of the legislative and executive branches, the Youth in Government allows students to participate in the Model Judicial Program (MJP). Cases are tried using the mock court trial process, the same process used in law schools.

Every high school in Michigan is invited to participate in these programs. For more information, please call 517/639-4480, or visit the web site at: <http://www.myig.org/>